The War Paper for Women

VOTES FOR WOMEN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

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DEDICATION

To the brave women who to-day are fighting for freedom: to the noble women who all down the ages kept the flag flying and looked forward to this day without seeing it: to all women all over the world, of whatever race, or creed, or calling, whether they be with us or against us in this fight, we dedicate this paper.

THE OUTLOOK

Parliament adjourned on August 21, and will not resume its sittings until October 16. For reasons that do not appear sufficient to any but those who are indifferent to the present unrepresentative character of the House of Commons, the Committee stage of the Representation of the People Bill was interrupted in June, and was only proceeded with as far as Clause 26 just before Parliament rose. Three parts of the Bill, dealing with franchise, registration, and costs of elections, have been considered; leaving the fourth part, concerning redistribution, as well as the Report stage and Third Reading, to be taken in the autumn. The disappointment of suffragists at the slowness in the progress of the Bill is slightly tempered by Mr. Bonar Law's assurance, given to Sir John Simon on the last day before the adjournment, that, apart from two trifling measures to be taken on the day that the House reassembles, the whole of the first week of the autumn sittings will be devoted to the deferred Reform Bill. We deal with the matter at greater length in our leading article.

Disfranchising the Army and Navy

An interesting debate, affecting women, arose over the Absent Voters' clause (Clause 18), when the Home Secretary put forward a proposal that soldiers and sailors out of the country should be enabled to appoint proxies at home to exercise their Parliamentary vote for them, the proxy to be the wife of the elector or other near relation, or another elector in the constituency. At this suggestion, which failed to carry general conviction, Mr. Arnold Ward rose to express the hope that all holders of proxies would be those already qualified to exercise the Parliamentary vote. Otherwise, he asked pathetically, "Where are we?"—and he proceeded to enlarge upon the hundreds of thousands—"perhaps millions"!—of soldiers' and sailors' wives under the age of 30, even under the age of 21, who would thus become voters, and "absolutely transform the scheme of woman suffrage" as accepted by the House. Nothing would please us better, needless to say, than to see the very unsatisfactory nature of Clause 4 of the Representation of the People Bill "absolutely transformed." But no one wants to enfranchise more women, or any other class of proxy voters, at the expense of soldiers and sailors; and it seems to us impossible to devise any system on these lines that would not merely rob the man in the trenches or on the high seas of his vote in order to change someone at home into a plural voter. The essence of the Absent Voters' clause is to secure the opinion at the next general election of the men who are actually waging the war. This can only be done by obtaining his vote at first hand, as is done in the case of the soldiers from our Dominions. The discussion of the clause has been postponed until the autumn, when we hope to see some more satisfactory scheme adopted.

Educating our Children

Mr. Fisher's Education Bill, of which we give some details on page 291, was introduced and given a First Reading on August 9. It is in some ways a step in advance, and in others a great disappointment. There is considerable vision in the general scheme of it, which seeks, in Mr. Fisher's words, "to provide enlarged and enriched opportunities for the education of the children of the poor"; and this aim is kept in view by those provisions which abolish the half-time system, as well as school exemptions under the age of ten, add further restrictions to juvenile employment out of school, and establish compulsory continuation schools in which, both for girls and boys, the education shall be partly physical and carried on in the employer's time. All this is to the good; and so is the establishment of nursery schools for infants under five, and the continuation of elementary education to the age of fifteen—this last provision being, however, left to the decision of the local education authority. But, as the *Manchester Guardian* wisely remarks, in commenting on the enthusiasm shown for the Bill by some Members in the House:—

> Compared not with the ideal but with common, brutal need it is modest enough. We shall still have the children of the poor, some of them as early as twelve years old and the vast majority of them from the age of fourteen, flung neck and crop into the economic struggle to battle not for life but for a livelihood. There is in such a scheme of things at best the shadow and the promise of a future in which the personality of the child of poor parents shall have as fair a chance as the personality of the child of wealthy parents—a human chance. When we find our legislators enthusiastic over so little we know how bitter hard will be the task of giving that shadow substance and that promise fulfilment.

We entirely agree, and think further that a great opportunity has been missed of framing a Bill that, with proper safeguards for the parents, might have made it illegal to employ any child for gain under the age of sixteen.

Where the Bill Fails

The Bill, in fact, goes too far and not far enough. It fails to free completely the poor person's child for educational purposes even up to the statutory age limit, which is fixed, in our opinion, two years lower than it ought to be. At the same time, by the extra restrictions it places on child labour, by the power it vests in the local education authority to keep the child at school for another year, it imposes an increased financial burden upon the parent, which the Bill does nothing to relieve, and which, as we have often pointed out, will fall mainly upon the mother, out of whose food and clothing the extra charge can alone be met. In addition, the wider aims of the continuation school system are narrowed by the hint contained in Mr. Fisher's exposition of this part of his scheme—that these will be carried out rather in the interests of the employer than in those of the child. The *Nation* (August 18) rightly calls this "the wrong way," and observes succinctly: "A century ago the employers preferred ignorant labour; to-day they prefer trained labour. The State is there to give them what they want." The same journal admirably criticises Mr. Fisher's fear of "disturbing the juvenile labour market"; and offers the following constructive suggestion:—

> If we simply declare that no child shall be employed for more than half-time between fourteen and eighteen, we halve the supply of child labour. The wages both of children and of adults will go up, and this will strengthen the working classes as a whole, while mitigating the hardships that might be inflicted on poor parents. Where hardships actually occur, pensions and maintenance allowances must be made.

Will not the House of Commons, about to become answerable to women as well as men constituents, enlarge the Bill on the lines thus laid down?

The New Orders

Not the smallest of the revolutions brought about by the war is that which has at long last caused women to be honoured for their deeds and achievements. It would be easy to criticise both the nature and the application of the new Order of the British Empire, to ask, for instance, why a woman cannot be made a knight instead of a "Dame," and given the less ambiguous title of Lady; and to wonder why some names are included in the lists when others are excluded. It is more gracious to congratulate those whose services are thus being recognized, and we begin, for personal reasons, with two whose names are associated with the United Suffragists. Dr. L. Garrett Anderson, a Vice-President of the U.S., becomes a Commander (C.B.E.) for her admirable work at the Endell Street Military Hospital; and Miss Lena Ashwell, formerly a member of the U.S. Committee, is made an Officer (O.B.E.) in recognition of what she has done as organizer of entertainments for the troops. Although the majority of the women recipients of the new Order are, naturally, war workers of one kind or another, it is highly satisfactory to note that names of others, connected with the reform work that belongs to all time, also occur in the lists. We refer to such names as those of Mrs. Barnett, Miss Margaret Macmillan, and Dr. Scharlieb. Last, and far from least, comes the list in which men and women stand on complete equality for valour, presence of mind, and unselfishness—qualities which are to be found in the nation's workers at all times and which will, we hope, be honoured after the war, as they are now honoured during the war, with the Medal of the Order.

Women Architects

We congratulate the Architectural Association on its decision to open its schools to women students. Two houses in Bedford Square have lately been acquired for the schools, and we understand that the cost of training will come to about £50 a year for three or four years. That is a good deal, though not to be compared with the amount spent on a man's training for the Church or Bar or the Army, at one of the old Universities or at Sandhurst. Hitherto women have not counted for much in architecture, but many will turn to the profession in the great changes which the war has brought upon the country. We would not in the least deny their power for "creative" design of the highest type; but the improvement of homes and offices will be the first thought when peace comes back, and women can be trusted to see that the house is built on practical lines for saving labour and making the cleaning and cooking as easy as such toilsome occupations can be. Besides, women have entered every kind of office now, and learnt how cold or stuffy, dark, and cheerless most of them are.

After the War

What is more, we may hope that the millions of soldiers who will return to ordinary life at the peace will no longer be content to put up with dreary little streets, or to allow their old comrades to dwell in them. Perhaps the soldiers themselves might be trusted to destroy the "slum" dwellings which must be cleared off first; for they will have learnt the arts of destruction in many lands. But women will certainly demand a voice in the design of their future homes. The Labour Committee on After-the-War Problems puts the number of new houses that will be required at a million. The Local Government Board estimates it at half-a-million. If we can only sweep away all the hideous districts which no human soul should inhabit, far more than a million new homes will be wanted. Yet on his Housing Committee, which is to decide upon the type of house required and to hurry on the building in various districts, with the aid of public funds, the President of the Local Government Board has so far not appointed one woman.

Items of Interest

The King of Italy has conferred the Italian bronze medal for valour upon Lady Helena Gleichen and Mrs. Nina Hollings, Joint Commandants of one of the radio-graphic units maintained in Italy by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John. This X-ray unit dealt with 1,532 cases, radioscopes and radiographs, between January 1 and April 30 of this year.

Mrs. McEwan, the only woman holding the office of deacon among English Presbyterians, has been elected President of the Liberal Association in the Enfield division of Middlesex. She is the first woman to be chosen to act in this capacity in the Home Counties. Among rare instances elsewhere are the Dowager Lady Nunburnholme, President of the Holderness L.A., and Mrs. Barnes, of the Oswestry L.A.

A notable decrease, during the war, in infant mortality resulting from overlying, is shown in the statistics for the period 1913-16, the figures for 1916 being 40 per cent. lower than for the previous year. In 1913, 1,226 deaths of infants occurred under the age of one year from this cause, as against 744 in 1916.

In answer to a question in the House of Commons on August 13, Mr. Roberts stated that "in view of the scarcity of timber workers, a limited number of women are being trained experimentally as timber measurers and clerks and as cutters of pitwood and tops."

The Executive of the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks have decided that women members serving abroad on clerical and other work for the Army shall be placed in the same position as men who have joined the Army, and shall be relieved from the payment of their contributions.

THE PRODIGIOUS PROBLEM OF YOUTH

By Madge Mears

There is no need to point out again the grimly ludicrous aspect of the recent popular enthusiasm for child welfare in this country. Let us be thankful for small mercies. If apprehension as to the future supply of cannon fodder has really given us the new Education Bill and the various progressive movements culminating in the quaint celebration of National Baby Week, then let us accept these benefits, so long overdue, with what satisfaction we may—"Though woman ain't no bloomin' fool; you bet that woman sees."

Indeed, we want all the enthusiasm we can muster when we turn to tackle the prodigious problems of childhood and youth. Our obvious sins of omission and commission leap to the eye: the slums, the overcrowding, the dismal heritage of preventable disease, the bad food, the understaffed Council Schools, the laborious employment of little kiddies of thirteen and fourteen for a few disgraceful shillings a week—all this we know. But I wonder whether, after all, our heaviest sin against these little ones is not really our incorrigible habit of regarding them as creatures entirely different and distinct from grown-up men and women; creatures to be treated, not as normal British citizens handicapped only by their own inevitable inexperience—as we all should be if we were suddenly dumped down in Manchuria without an interpreter—but as a race of strangers, a race apart?

Forced Artificial Segregation

It is appropriate that within the last few months we should have had two wonderfully illuminating and thoughtful books upon this difficult subject—"Regiment of Women," by one Clemence Dane, and Alec Waugh's "The Loom of Youth." Reading them—and every social reformer, every child-lover, and certainly every Suffragist should read them—we may come to see that hygienic nurseries and sterilised milk alone will not solve our problems for us. We may also get a glimpse of the root cause of all the blundering, exasperating, hopeless misunderstanding, which has, within the last twenty years, continually threatened to drive the two sexes into opposing camps. As they leave the nursery, the children of the well-to-do classes—the men and women in whose hands the future of England very largely lies—are suddenly and violently cut off from their natural, wholesome, sisterly and brotherly companionships; and for the next six or eight years, the most important of their lives, they live for nine months out of twelve in an atmosphere of forced artificial segregation. The result is that the young men emerge into the world awkward, boorish, and self-conscious in the society of women; the young women, equally awkward, boorish, and self-conscious in the society of men; and between them both there is a lack of comprehension, a complete and absolute failure to find each other's point of view, which a lifetime of worldly experience may never remedy. The immediate harm done to the child is often grave and lasting; the ultimate harm done to the nation is quite incalculable.

The main idea, of course, is to avoid a premature awakening of the sexual instincts; and no better method of defeating this laudable ambition could possibly be devised. To the schoolgirl, anything in trousers is a wonder and a marvel and a great adventure; to the undergraduate, any rowdy little chorus girl may be a dream of romance.

Fumbling Youthful Hands

And they both cling with pathetic faith to the first article of their creed—"Everything is so different for a man!" "Women—well, dash it all, there's no accounting for women!" Can we honestly be surprised? The boy, during his impressionable adolescence, has been carefully taught to regard women either as a costly and dangerous snare, or as a rather dubious joke. The girl who takes a human interest in her fellow men does so at the risk of a terrific rumpus with her celibate head-mistress, and has not always gumption enough to retaliate by a classical couplet on the blackboard. And then we place the complex machinery of modern social life in their fumbling youthful hands, and grumble at the subsequent friction.

It is frequently said that men and women are now working together for the common good as they have never worked before. But this is only half a truth. Women are working side by side in doing men's jobs; the men—the electors and legislators of the future—are in the camp, or in the trenches, or in Class C3, or in their graves. And now that female labour—after what mighty struggles only its organisers know!—is rising to be a power in the land, whispers are abroad that the employer is finding the female labourer a strangely disappointing person—no longer the docile, obliging, credulous creature of his early dreams. He has his excuse for getting rid of her all ready up his sleeve. Also, this new craze for cradles may turn, when the present crisis is over, to the old familiar cry of the street corner loafer—"You git along 'ome an' mind the biby!"

Beware of Optimism!

This may appear a pessimistic view to take. But if the war has taught us nothing else, it has surely taught us that the most heroic campaign may fail at the very moment of fruition solely by reason of too much optimism.

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THE EDUCATION BILL

Some Points from Mr. Fisher's Speech

On August 10, in a very thin House in which the Front Benches were noticeably only sparsely occupied, Mr. Fisher introduced the Government's Education Bill. Its main provisions are (1) Abolition of the half-time system; (2) Establishment of compulsory part-time day continuation schools; (3) Establishment of nursery schools for infants; (4) Abolition of exemptions from school attendance for children under 10; (5) No child under 12 to be employed for profit; (6) Employment of children under 14 to be subjected to fresh limitations; (7) Higher forms of elementary education to be developed and physical condition of pupils to be improved. Other provisions deal with the improvement of administration, the consolidation of elementary school grants, the relation of private schools to the national system of education.

PASSAGES FROM THE SPEECH

What the Bill Fails to Do

I am not proposing here to deal with the scholarship system, the training colleges, or libraries; and the establishment of a satisfactory pension scheme for teachers in secondary, technical, and other schools, at present outside the State scheme of pensions, must be left to a separate measure.

There is another educational problem of great urgency which, after much anxious consideration, I have decided to exclude from the operation of the Bill. In the three years of war some 600,000 children have been withdrawn prematurely from school and become immersed in industry. They are working on munitions, in the fields, and in the mines. In a thousand different ways these children are contributing to our success in the war. Though they are earning wages, and in some cases high wages, let us make no mistake about it, these children are incurring a real sacrifice, the effects of which, in many cases, will be felt to the end of their lives. I ask the House to consider whether the nation has not incurred a special responsibility towards these children who have been brought in to help in the war, often in circumstances most adverse to the formation of stable character. There can be only one answer—that some special means must be found, either by administrative action or otherwise, whereby this responsibility may be adequately discharged.

The Half-timer

Originally the half-time system represented a concession to the claims of education. Boys and girls in Lancashire were released from the factory for half-day's schooling at a time when, in other parts of the country, they were still deprived of all educational opportunities. Now the situation is reversed, and the child population in half-time regions of the North suffers under peculiar and exceptional disabilities. . . . We consider, then, that the time has come when in the general interests of the country and in the special interest of the children notice should be given that this system should, after a convenient interval, come to an end, and we consider that the termination of the war, when a large mass of new labour will be thrown on the market, will be a convenient period at which to terminate this system.

Juvenile Employment

We have now an overwelming mass of evidence to the effect that the health of our children suffers from premature or excessive employment. You may trace the evil effects in diminished height and weight, in curvature of the spine, in cardiac affections, and in deficiency of the senses, especially the sense of vision, and in the bad dentition of our working classes. The reports of our school medical services are full of them.

Accordingly, we propose that no child under twelve shall be employed in shops, and we further provide that no child under fourteen shall be employed on any day on which he is required to attend school before the close of school hours or after eight p.m. on that day, or on other days before six a.m. or after eight p.m. The House will observe that under this provision a child between twelve and fourteen may be employed between six a.m. and eight p.m. on Saturdays and during school holidays, and, though we have come to the conclusion that there is something to be said for a little employment on days on which the school provides no regular work, we are fully sensible that this liberty may be abused in the future, as it has been in the past, and the Bill accordingly provides that the local education authority, if they are satisfied, on the report of the school medical officer or otherwise, that the child is being employed in such a way as to be prejudicial to health or education, may forbid or regulate that employment.

Continuation Schools

We provide that every young person in the kingdom who has not received a full-time education up to the age of sixteen should receive a part-time education up to the age of eighteen, either in schools provided by the local education authority or in schools under their direction, such as the schools established by manufacturers in their works, or in schools providing satisfactory alternative instruction. . . . It must be taken out of the employer's time, and provision is made to ensure that the young person who is required to attend continuation classes shall not be worked unduly long hours during the days on which the classes are held, and that he or she shall be given a reasonable interval for food, rest, and washing between work and school. . . . The character of the instruction will be partly physical. We feel that it is important to secure a physical minimum in the nation, and that this is just as important for girls as for boys.

I need not say that on purely educational ground I should have preferred a longer amount of instruction, even if that amount had been confined to the age between fourteen and sixteen, but, after careful consideration, I came to the conclusion that the practical obstacles were too great, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to provide, in a reasonable length of time, the requisite supply of teachers of ability, that the scheme, if it is to be made accessible to the working people, would have to be supplemented by a very large expenditure in maintenance and building allowances, and that it would involve too great a disturbance of the juvenile labour market.

The New Voter

We are extending the franchise, we are making a greater demand than ever before upon the civic spirit of the ordinary man and woman at a time when the problems of national life and of world policy upon which this House will be called upon to decide have become exceedingly complex and difficult, and how can we expect an intelligent response to the demands which the community propose to make upon the instructed judgment of its men and women unless we are prepared to make some further sacrifices in order to form and fashion the minds of the young?

◆

PRAISE FOR THE FUTURE ELECTOR

The First Lord's Opinion

A highly satisfactory letter from Sir Eric Geddes, the newly-appointed First Lord of the Admiralty, was read by Mrs. Heitland at a recent meeting in Newnham College of the Cambridge Women's Suffrage Association. In the course of the letter this passage occurs:—

"At the Ministry of Munitions I was closely connected with munition factories employing a very large number of women. In France I have had ample opportunities of observing at first hand the very magnificent services that the women of this country have rendered towards the prosecution of the war. It is perfectly clear to me that by their services in the war women have earned a right to an increasing share in the industrial life and destinies of the country, and consequently a growing interest in the adjustment and settlement of peculiar political and social problems. It seems to me that the only corollary to this must be the admission of women to the franchise, a right which they have earned, and which in justice they should receive. I can therefore say with confidence that I am prepared to support the Bill now before Parliament for the enfranchisement of women."

Mr. Prothero's Tribute

At the annual prize-giving of the Swanley Horticultural College, the President of the Board of Agriculture, who was present with his wife, said he believed that there was no industry in the world for which women were better qualified than that of horticulture. Every one of those helping in the present time of necessity and stress was doing undoubtedly a great national work. It was one of the finest features of this present movement to obtain production of food that women had come forward in such numbers and with such enthusiasm. All over the country farmers were beginning to realise their value. The Board had set up training depots for women, who were passed out into country situations.

"Not in the Limelight"

The difficulty at the moment of putting women on the land had reference to housing accommodation, and he was afraid that the difficulty would remain. The women upon whom the organisation of this women's work on the land depended mainly were the district registrars, women who were working not in the limelight but in complete obscurity, and it was upon them and their persistent painstaking that the success of the movement largely depended.

◆

IRISH WOMEN AND THE CONVENTION

On August 16 a joint deputation from the Irish Suffrage Societies was received by Sir Horace Plunkett. They urged the importance of the representation of women on the Convention that has met to consider a scheme for the settlement of Ireland, and suggested that a woman should be asked to fill one of the vacant places on the Convention. They further demanded that the enfranchisment of women should be included in any scheme recommended as a result of its deliberations.

HUMOURS OF THE TRIBUNALS

It is not often that humour characterises the proceedings of the tribunals. On two occasions lately, however, the serious, and often pathetic, course of events was relieved by a lighter vein of thought.

Little Bo-Peep

In one of these the farmer, who was pleading for the exemption of his shepherd, was asked the usual question: "Why can't you get a woman to take his place?" The applicant's answer was quick and to the point. "I never heard of but one woman shepherd," he said, "and *she* lost her sheep and didn't know where to find them!"

The second instance is one, perhaps, of unconscious humour. A jeweller pleaded for the exemption of his manager, who, he said, was the only man he had left in the shop. There was a woman who cleaned silver, but, he added, *it would be impossible to have a woman manager in a place where there were so many articles of great value.* Temporary exemption for two months was granted.

It is certainly instructive to learn that honesty is another of those unwomanly qualities we used to hear so much about before the man in the street gave up being an anti-suffragist.

LECTURES ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Miss Margaret Hodge, whose lectures on the Russian Revolution gave so much pleasure earlier in the year, proposes to give another course in the autumn, beginning in October, on the French Revolution, with special reference to the changes in social life and to the leading part played by women in effecting those changes. The European literature of the period will also be dealt with. Full particulars of the course, the proceeds of which will be devoted to the funds of the B.D.S.U., will be found on the back page of this issue.

AN ECHO OF THE GLORIOUS PAST

It is possible that the House of Commons grille will be sent to the London Museum as a souvenir. It will be remembered that the Suffragettes were much attached to it at one time.—**The Globe.**

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A NATION DISFRANCHISED

Speaking in London on the fourth anniversary of the war, the Prime Minister said:—

> "The nation has chosen its own Workmen's and Soldiers' Committee. That is the House of Commons. If at any time that ceases to represent the nation, well then the nation must choose another; but do not let us muddle things by permitting the setting up of two rival and contending Governments in the State. . . . The nation as a whole makes the war, and the sacrifices are pretty equally distributed among all classes. The nation as a whole makes the peace. As it is a common sacrifice, it must likewise be a common settlement."

We are not concerned here with the proposal to set up in this country Councils of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates on the model of the Russian Soviet, except in so far as that proposal springs from the extraordinary situation which it is the purpose of this article to discuss. What is of greater import to us in the passage quoted above is that part of it which assumes that the House of Commons is representative of the nation. We do not speak exclusively as Suffragists when we uncompromisingly deny this assumption. Women are not the only section of the people, though they are by far the largest section, that the present House of Commons does not represent. It is a matter of common knowledge, borne out by many by-elections, that, owing to the staleness of the register and the creation through war conditions of large numbers of out-voters, less than 40 per cent., even of those men who are entitled to vote under the old electoral qualification, would be there to vote at a general election. As long as the register remains unrevised and the franchise remains unreformed, it may with a little pardonable exaggeration be said that we are at this moment a nation disfranchised by the war.

A Democracy in Name

What does this amount to? Obviously, to an anomaly that affects both our national existence and our prestige as one of the Allied nations. We are fighting a war for democracy —and we have ceased to be even as much of a democracy as we were before the war. The whole nation, says the Prime Minister, makes the war—and only a negligible proportion of the nation has any power left with which to control those at whose will the war can be brought to an end, or prolonged indefinitely. A disfranchised nation is more in the hands of the Government to which it originally gave birth than any Russian peasant ever was in the hands of the Tsar and the Grand Dukes, who did not profess to govern constitutionally. A disfranchised nation can threaten and protest: short of revolution, it can no more carry out its threats than a child can escape from a room by beating at the locked door with its fists. For Mr. Lloyd George overlooked one salient fact when, dismissing in a sentence the very serious situation that was materialising in the ranks of Labour, owing to its sense of the inefficiency of present forms of government, he lightly said:—"If at any time the House of Commons ceases to represent the nation, well, then, the nation can choose another." He overlooked the fact that at the present moment the nation, being disfranchised, cannot choose another.

The Government Absolute

Others beside the Prime Minister overlook this fact. Mr. Frederic Harrison, in the course of a letter to the *Times* (August 18), writes on this very point:—

> In times of revolution, constitutions, law, and governments are ever being displaced by illegal, self-elected clubs with loud voices and vague ideals. Rodzianko, Redmond, Necker, should be names of warning to Lloyd George, for the present House of Commons is a broken reed for Constitution, Parliament, and Monarchy to trust in the approaching storm. There is but one salvation—appeal to the country and get a new and complete mandate from the nation.

Mr. Harrison recognises that the present House of Commons does not represent the nation; he recognises the consequent risk of the establishment of a more revolutionary scheme of government, in place of the one whose machinery has ceased to work. But he does not appear to recognise what the *Manchester Guardian*, in its comment upon Mr. Lloyd George's speech, clearly grasps when it says:—

> With a redistribution scheme in progress and with millions of voters under arms, the existing constituencies would have little more authority than the present House of Commons. . . . By the decision of this House of Commons the rise and fall of Ministers must be determined, till appeal can be made to the wider electorate which is coming into being.

This is the crux of the present dilemma. The legitimate expedient of a general election cannot be applied, unless by the unscrupulous, because "the existing constituencies would have little more authority than the present House of Commons." The Government is, for the time being, absolute.

What has Happened to the Reform Bill?

The situation can be saved: the Representation of the People Bill was designed to save it. As Suffragists, we have little reason to complain of the debates that have already taken place on the Bill. If it becomes law, woman suffrage must become law with it. Our main source of uneasiness is with regard to the delay in its progress through Parliament. In common with most of those who were watching this, we saw no reason why the Bill should not be sent up to the Lords before the adjournment. We are aware that the time occupied in preparing the Redistribution Schedules is one reason advanced for the sudden postponement of the debates in Committee, after the franchise clauses were disposed of in June. The urgency of the Corn Production Bill was said to be another. Both obstructions have now been removed. The Corn Bill is on the statute book. Mr. Bonar Law, in answer to questions in the House on August 20, stated that the Representation of the People Bill will be taken in the first week after the adjournment, and intimated that the Redistribution Schedules will be ready by that time. Three parts of the Bill have been considered in Committee, leaving only the fourth part, dealing with redistribution, to be examined; this, with the Report Stage and Third Reading, should not occupy the House unduly, so that, failing artificial obstruction, the measure ought certainly to reach the Lords in November and become law easily before Christmas. We regard it as a sign of grace that the Government should have allocated the first week of the autumn sittings for its further consideration. But we say unhesitatingly that if the peril in which we stand as a disfranchised nation were understood to the full, Parliament would not have dared to adjourn (and for a period of eight weeks) until that peril had been removed by the passing of the Reform Bill. In a word, if political liberty were appraised by the people at its true value, no Corn Bill, however urgent, would have been allowed to replace a vital Reform Bill, and a redistribution scheme would have been ready in time to secure the passage of the latter before the adjournment.

Bureaucracy and Revolution

A democracy that has lost the ordinary powers of a democracy is faced by two extreme possibilities—a tyrannical bureaucracy and revolution. The very real opposition to the Corn Production Bill in July, which was met by a Governmental threat of a general election, broke down because its leaders saw that an appeal to the country on a stale register, with the young men away from home, would be merely an appeal to the same set of opinions against which they found themselves already pitted in Parliament. But when you deprive a people of their constitutional weapon—as suffragists know well!—you are inviting them to use revolutionary ones. Also, in a situation like this, bureaucracy, too, sees its opportunity. So, next November, when the extended life of this Parliament expires, a curious situation may arise. Thanks to the procrastinations of our governors, the new register cannot possibly be ready by then. It is in the power, therefore, of Parliament, by refusing consent to a further extension of its existence, to bring about a general election in November on the present register. We do not seriously think that any party in the State wants a general election in November. But meanwhile, the war goes on, and every party in the State is deeply concerned in the war. The war goes on, and every party in the State hopes for peace at some time or another. And if that time should occur before the new register is ready, we shall be faced with a prospect of peace negotiations undertaken by a moribund Parliament and a Government that by no stretch of imagination could be said, in the Prime Minister's phrase, to represent "the nation as a whole."

The Risk we are Running

We have no wish to overstate the position. It is to be hoped that recent events have convinced both the Government and the Government's critics of the danger that lies in our being deprived of the machinery necessary for obtaining in a constitutional manner the opinion and sanction of the people. But we cannot overstate the serious character of the risk, however slight its chance of realisation, that the whole nation will be running during the months that must still elapse before the electoral machinery is completed—the risk of unconstitutional practices at home, in the absence of the ordinary constitutional safeguards that defend us equally against revolution and against bureaucratic tyranny—the greater risk of a peace that, when it comes, will not be a national peace. That risk cannot be too clearly kept in view by those to whom enfranchisement means the dawn of freedom, and freedom means the foundation of a new world in which peace and friendship, rather than enmity and strife, will be the common possession of all.

Evelyn Sharp.

THE MORALS OF MAJORITIES

By Laurence Housman

If, as seems possible, six million women in this country obtain the vote in the near future, it is to be hoped that they will take, in one respect at least, a more moral view of their acquisition than men in like circumstances have done in the past, and will remain humble about the moral sanctions on which they become the possessors of something denied to others.

In the course of our constitutional history "majorities" have had a bad way of arrogating to themselves virtues and moral sanctions which they do not really possess. Having obtained the political weapon themselves, they have assumed a complete right, moral as well as legal, to impose their will on those who are without representation. Uncritical of the imperfect sanction on which their power rested, they have forgotten to be humble; and when the unrepresented have pressed their claim for political equality they have said, like Mr. Lloyd George and certain Labour Leaders in the past—"In my own time, and in my own way,"—or, in other words, "I'm busy. Don't interrupt!"

Majority Rule only an Expedient

It should be borne in mind that constitutions—even those which make the proudest boast of safe-guarded right and freedom—have always in their midst obstructions, obscurities, and active forces opposed to liberty, and having as their main aim to use the power the constitution gives them for the curtailment of liberty, and, more strenuously still, against its further extension. And so long as political majorities are so minded, their moral sanction is imperfect. At best they are a good working expedient for carrying on through a period of growth and development; but in no case have majorities "a divine right," such as shouting politicians are apt to claim for them—a doctrine not less superstitious than that of the divine right of kings or ecclesiastics. All that can be said for majority rule is that it presents a means, when wisely employed, for bringing government very much nearer to the satisfaction of human nature than the uncontrolled rule of autocracy or of oligarchy.

But when government claims its sanction from a majority, that majority—if its sanction is to be moral and not merely legal—must be derived without hindrance, and without inequality or sectional privilege, from the whole life of the nation. And just in so far as it fails to be so constituted its moral sanctions are imperfect.

Will to Power—or Will to Love?

At whose bidding to-day, and for what motive, are we really being governed? Put it at its very broadest: is this country being run on the lines of the Will to Power or the Will to Love? Does defence of life stand higher than defence of property? Is the conscription of property for the need of the State as much to the mind of the Government and its electorate as the conscription of life? In other words, is the life-interest of the nation, which is the biggest interest of all, proportionately established, as it should be, in our representative system—in party and in parliament—about the property interest? If not, then our representative system is imperfect and its moral sanctions fall short.

Government stands, in this country, on an electoral majority. But what principle does that electoral majority itself stand for? Put the question once more in its broadest form: does it stand first for the claims of life or the claims of property? Does it seek to set up equality of condition, or inequality? Does it favour privilege and vested interests, or seek only common ground and the common weal? And if Government to-day stands rather for the Will to Power than the Will to Love, is it not perhaps a reflection of the temper and moral limitations of its electorate? What is the mind of that electorate towards those who stay unrepresented? Is it a mind for equality, or for inequality? By that it must be judged.

The Moral Sanction to Legislate

What, on the other hand, are the minorities and the unrepresented seeking—those whom your electoral majorities have rule over? Are they, those less powerful bodies of our fellow countrymen and women, seeking for privilege, or only for common ground? That question goes to the whole root of the moral sanction of majority rule. If the answer be that they seek only a like liberty upon common ground and equality, then—it matters not how large the majority against them; if the majority continues to deny their claim, it undermines by so doing its own moral sanction to legislate and govern.

And so it follows that government to be representative must make open and available to all whatever qualification for citizenship it imposes. If education be the test, it must provide that the education be attainable by all classes alike: if industrial or residential, it must so order the national life that no person of industry and goodwill shall be debarred from the prescribed qualification. Universal franchise, on the unattainable qualification, let us say, of standing on one leg for a fortnight, would be a mockery deserving of instant revolt; and there is some mockery in setting up any qualification of which a willing and painstaking citizen cannot avail himself.

What Constitutes Despotism?

Let us remember always that the claim to govern others is in itself an assumption which needs constantly to be critically examined as to its sanction and tested by its results; and that in assuming that position any organised or privileged body lays itself open to a test other and different in kind from all tests applicable to the governed. Government is a function; being governed is not a function. And according to the moral sanctions which a government has behind it, or carelessly does without, its control over the governed may be a trust freely accorded or a despotism unwarrantably imposed. The fact that the government of, say, ten or twenty unrepresented millions in a nation emanates from ten or twenty other millions instead of from a single autocrat does not make the government less a despotism as regards those who remain unenfranchised, though it may possibly make it more intelligent and more human in regard to them. But if the will to power is the dominant political idea of those electoral millions, it will inevitably reflect itself in their attitude and conduct towards the non-elector; nor can they indulge in that will to power extraneously towards other and "subject" races without the virus of that immoral tendency striking home, and affecting the civil conditions of the less fortunate or the less represented in the national life.

These are considerations which may well be offered to those women who, in the near future, will obtain the electoral power which so many others have struggled for with equal ardour and with equal need, but have not attained. Will they, in the day of their victory, stand faithfully as the advance guard of those who were yesterday their comrades in the political struggle; or will they, having attained themselves, exalt the doctrine of "majority rule" into a fetish, forgetting the incomplete sanctions on which they hold their political power; and thenceforward say to others, as demagogues in power have ever been prone to say when questions of principle have inconveniently obtruded themselves—"In my own time, and in my own way; but not now"?

The First Duty of Voters

All forms of government can be used for the suppression of liberty: Democracy quite as much as any other form, and more effectively perhaps, if the mind of those who have a voice in it is not a mind which intends to establish love above power, and life above property, in the affairs of State. When such a mind secures for itself an electoral extension, it has but secured tyranny in a larger form, while with the blessed phrase "majority rule" it deadens its conscience to the wrong of the inequalities which it allows to remain. Let voters remember that their first duty is not to themselves but to those who do not yet share with them the safeguarding weapon of the vote.

◆

THE PASSING OF THE GRILLE

Oh Anti's all, do you recall the days that once you knew,
When you were the majority, and Suffragists were few?
When women all were womanly, and men were really male,
And bipeds clamouring for votes were promptly put in gaol?
When the female of the species was made to know her place,
And hidden in the gallery with bars before her face?
But now all that is at an end, she'll sit where she's a will,
For the House has just consented to removal of the grille.

That prehistoric state of things has gone without a doubt;
The Suffragist is everywhere; you cannot keep her out;
The Anti's' ranks are getting thin; their day is nearly done,
Their prominent supporters are converted one by one;
Six million women soon will vote and—worst and final blow!
The House will never be again the House they used to know,
For every night in future the gallery will fill
With those who hitherto have scorned to cower behind the grille.

Bertha Brewster.

FUTURE CONSTITUENTS

Anticipating the Woman's Vote—Debate in the House on Admission of Women as Solicitors—Abolition of the Grille

The fortnight before the adjournment, which took place on August 21, was marked in the House of Commons by more than one sign of a growing realization on the part of Members that women will be among their future constituents. A very significant little discussion took place on August 8, for instance, on the motion for the Second Reading of the Solicitors' (Examination) Bill, a measure providing that two instead of three examinations a year shall be held by the Law Society, a reduction called for by the shortage of candidates owing to the war. The suggestion made by the Solicitor-General (Sir Gordon Hewart), who had charge of the Bill, was that the Bill should be carried through all its stages at a single sitting, as it was "a war measure of the simplest kind." Opposition to this course was instantly raised by a number of Members, on the ground that no opportunity had been given to the House to discuss another Solicitors' Bill, which had already passed the House of Lords, and by which women would be admitted to these examinations and allowed to practise as solicitors. It was only upon being given an undertaking by Sir Gordon Hewart, that he would convey these representations to his colleagues, that the opposing speakers consented to pass the Second Reading at all. We give below some extracts from the speeches made on this occasion.

Another occurrence, equally significant and more sensational, was the motion for the abolition of the Grille, agreed to without a debate and by a majority of 166 to 20, on August 15.

THE SOLICITORS' BILL

Passages from the Debate on the Second Reading of the Solicitors' (Examination) Bill, August 8, 1917

Mr. Holt (who moved that the Bill be read again this day three months): No doubt it is very desirable to facilitate the examination of candidates for the profession of solicitor, but I cannot understand why the Government have failed, during war time, to bring in a Bill for the admission of women to that profession. A Bill for that purpose has passed the other House, and we require some explanation of the failure of the Government to put that Bill on the Order Paper. Their failure to carry it through shows a lamentable disregard of what is, in fact, the proper function of the profession of solicitor. The Government are apparently treating the profession from a point of view of the vested interests of those persons who now carry on that profession, whereas that profession ought to be treated, so far as legislation is concerned, solely from the point of view of those who employ solicitors. Will the Solicitor-General explain to the House on what ground during war-time he introduces to this House, as a war measure, a Bill for the purpose of facilitating the examination and admission of men into the profession of solicitor whereas, at the same time, he refuses to introduce a Bill facilitating and legalising the entrance into that profession of women? . . . Why is the Government not allowing this Bill to come forward? Admittedly for one reason only, because they do not want to interfere with a vested interest. There is nothing else but the desire for a close trade corporation—one of the worst and narrowest trade unions. For that reason only the Bill which passed in another place has not been brought forward in this House, but has been suppressed by the action of the Government. So long as that is so I hope we shall not facilitate the admission of men to the profession of solicitor.

Mr. Dickinson:—This subject of the admission of women to become solicitors is by no means a new one. It has been before Parliament for many years, and the House of Lords, on the proposal of the late Lord Chancellor, after a very considerable Debate, and with the views of both sides very fully put forward, thought it advisable to pass a Bill through that Chamber authorising women to become solicitors. I believe, from what I can gather of the opinion of the House, that this House would pass the same Bill if it only had the chance. . . . There will be plenty of time to do it after the Recess, and I think certainly, whatever opposition they may think they would find outside amongst the solicitors themselves, they would find there was no such opposition in this House.

Mr. Leif Jones:—It seems to me very extraordinary that in a reform of this kind the Government should have allowed the House of Lords to go in advance of them. The difficulty in these matters has always been in getting them passed in another place, but with that difficulty overcome and with a willingness in this House, I cannot understand why the Government have not introduced these two Bills together. They would have got them both. . . . My learned friend cannot plead that this is merely a war measure because in the last Clause power is given to the Lord Chancellor, with the consent of the Master of the Rolls, to extend this measure for such longer period as he may by Order allow.

Sir Gordon Hewart:—No doubt there is much to be said for the view of those who desire that women should be admitted to the profession of solicitor, but it does not appear to me that their particular cause is advanced by the mere opposition which is offered to this Bill, because even if women were admitted to the profession, it might nevertheless be a great convenience and a great saving of expense to have no more than two kinds of each examination each year. . . . I trust that both to-night and upon a subsequent discussion the merits of this Bill will be considered by itself, and that the Bill is not going to be prejudiced in any way by the views which hon. Members may hold on what, after all, is quite a different matter.

Mr. Gulland:—The memorandum says that owing to the war there is not a sufficient number of candidates. Why not admit these women who are qualified to do the work, and who everyone admits are just as capable of doing it as men? I appeal to the Solicitor-General to recognise that the women have a strong claim to enter this profession, from which alone they are barred. I think the Government should really consent to the adjournment of this Debate so that the Solicitor-General may consult his colleagues about the other Bill that is still before the House.

Colonel Greig:—Surely it is not fair on a Bill of this kind which deals entirely with a great public body and which is not a private Bill in the ordinary sense to raise another question of long standing and one which has agitated legal circles for years. . . . Many of us may be in favour of a proposal of that kind, but surely it is far better in the interests of that case that it should be considered enirely separate from what is a mere matter of rendering easier and cheaper the performance of a great public duty by a great public body.

Mr. Boyton:—I hope that the Government will not yield to the blandishments of a section of this House who have taken the opportunity of advocating the admission of women as solicitors. I cannot conceive a more ill-timed suggestion on a matter which must be one of thorny debate and difference of opinion, and especially in this time of war when the solicitors' profession almost to a man are fighting for their country, than that the opportunity should be taken to advocate a great change in the law of that kind.

Mr. Bentham:—I am considerably disappointed with the reply of the Solicitor-General. . . . The right hon. Gentleman will not argue, I suppose, that he thinks that women are too good to become solicitors. . . . We are going to add to the electorate of this great country something like 6,000,000 or 8,000,000 women, and surely there can be no objection to adding a few women to this very respectable and learned profession.

The following dialogue took place at the end of the debate:—

Mr. L. Jones:—Do we understand that if the right hon. Gentleman gets the Second Reading he will not attempt to go further to-night?

Sir G. Hewart:—Yes.

Mr. L. Jones:—I take it that after the discussion which has taken place he will also consult with his colleagues about the possibility of bringing in the other Bill this Session and passing it? I will not object to the Adjournment if some such consideration takes place.

Sir G. Hewart:—I should certainly.

Mr. L. Jones:—In that case I should say, personally, I think the House ought not to object to take the Second Reading.

THE BILL PASSED

On August 15, when the Solicitors' (Examination) Bill was passed through its remaining stages, Mr. Charles Roberts and Major Hills made an energetic attempt to amend it in Committee so as to include women candidates. The Speaker, however, ruled these out of order. Sir Gordon Hewart, when appealed to, stated that he had consulted with his colleagues on the subject of the other measure, the Solicitors' (Qualification of Women) Bill, and added that this was "a Private Members' Bill, which the Government, for the present at any rate, cannot take up as a Government measure." Mr. Bonar Law, in answer to a question by Mr. Dickinson on the same day, was equally discouraging. He was "not aware" of the undertaking given by the Solicitor-General in order to secure the Second Reading of the Government Bill on August 8; and could not make any promise that the Private Bill referred to "will be taken up as a Government measure during the autumn sittings."

REMOVAL OF THE GRILLE

On August 15, the House of Commons, sitting in Committee on Supply, passed the following resolution by a majority of 166 to 20:—

> That a supplementary sum, not exceeding £5, be granted to His Majesty to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1918, for expenditure in respect of Houses of Parliament Buildings.

We do not know whether the instruction to remove the grille from the front of the Ladies' Gallery was framed in this cryptic manner to save the susceptibilities of those Members who might otherwise have felt compelled by principle to vote against it, or whether it is an example of the Parliamentary method of saying one thing and doing another. However, as in this case the left hand of the House is removing a century-old insult to women, we have no objection to the pretence of keeping its right hand in ignorance about it. There was no debate on the motion, though the following dialogue took place at question time on August 20:—

Sir Henry Cowan asked the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to a statement made in the House, in reply to a question on 23rd March, 1908, by the then First Commissioner of Works, to the effect that while sight and sound are interrupted and intercepted by the stone mullions in the Ladies' Gallery, these mullions are so essential a part of the structure of the House that it is impossible to interfere with or remove them; and whether he will say how, when removing the grille, he proposes to deal with these structural obstructions to sight and sound?

The First Commissioner of Works (Sir A. Mond):—It is not proposed to remove the stone mullions, as they form part of the structure of the House itself.

Sir H. Cowan:—Does the right hon. Gentleman imagine that the enfranchised woman of the future will be content with the inferior accommodation to be afforded her?

Sir A. Mond:—I am afraid I cannot at present reconstruct the House of Commons.

An Hon. Member:—Get another gallery!

We are ourselves of the opinion that there should be no Ladies' Gallery, but that all the galleries to which men strangers are admitted should be thrown open to women, including, certainly, the Press Gallery. The removal of the grille is, however, a step in the right direction and greatly to be welcomed as such. That there should have been so little journalistic humour shown on such an occasion is another mark of public progress. This is not true of unconscious humour, of which much was apparent in the answers of some of the opposing M.P.'s to the question—"Why did you vote against the abolition of the grille?" appearing in the columns of the *Weekly Dispatch* (August 19). Lest our readers may have missed these gems of Parliamentary logic, we reprint them herewith:—

Lieut. Blair:—I was guided by the wishes of a special lady in a matter of such paramount importance in war-time as the removal of the grille. I regret if it means the forfeiture of the privilege of ladies attending prayers, as they could do behind the grille—they require praying for!

Mr. W. A. Lindsay:—I thought that the beauty of the occupants of the Gallery, when fully seen, would distract Members from their duties.

Col. Pryce-Jones:—I am opposed to the abolition of the grille for the women's sake.

Sir Clifford Cory:—Because (1) most of the women I have met do not want it abolished; and (2) in most ways, as well as architecturally, it seems undesirable.

Sir J. T. Agg-Gardner:—Because many ladies expressed a preference for its retention. Personally, I am predisposed against unnecessary innovations.

Sir J. D. Rees:—Solely protest against dealing with such trivialities in war-time.

The Right Hon. W. Hayes Fisher:—Keep the small grilled gallery for those ladies who prefer it, and throw open larger galleries to both sexes when both share the franchise.

Mr. W. Burdett-Coutts:—Because mystery lends enchantment to the view.

Mr. Basil E. Peto:—The reason I challenged the vote for the removal of the grille from the Ladies' Gallery was that it had been intimated to the House that in the present state of business at the close of the session it was not possible for the question to be debated. The House was, therefore, not in possession of the reasons of the Government for considering the matter an urgent one, that should be undertaken at the present time. I am not convinced that there is anything to be gained by their proposal. It seemed to me to be quite illogical to regard it as a matter of such urgency that it must be undertaken now—an alteration which has never been thought necessary during the last eighty years, since the House was built.

Lieut. E. M. Archdale:—I consider the House of Commons not suitable for an opera box, where dress and glitter must distract attention from business.

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

27, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2. Telephone, Holborn 5880

Colours: Purple, White and Orange

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MEMBERSHIP FORM

UNITED SUFFRAGISTS

27, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. 2.

OBJECT

To secure a Government measure to remove existing electoral anomalies and give votes to all women and all men.

The minimum subscription is a shilling a year. Members are relied upon to support the Society to the best of their ability.

NAME (Mr., Mrs., Miss) ____________________
(Please write clearly)
ADDRESS ____________________
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This form, when filled in, should be sent with membership fee to the Hon. Secretary, United Suffragists, at the above address.

U.S. WOMEN'S CLUB

92, Borough Road, S.E.
Secretary: Miss V. Aitken. Tel.: Hop 4172

The Club has been closed throughout August, during which time some of the members have been taking their summer holiday at Littlehampton. It re-opens on September 3, and a successful autumn and winter session is looked forward to. The weekly lectures will be resumed in the second week of September. The list of speakers follows:—

Tuesday, September 11; 8 p.m.—Speaker: Miss Margaret Hodge, on "Canada."

Tuesday, September 18; 8 p.m.—Speaker: Miss Evelyn Sharp, on "The Mother and the Education Bill."

Tuesday, September 25; 8 p.m.—Speaker: Mr. Laurence Housman, on "Prison Reform in America."

U.S. MEETING IN NORWOOD

At a meeting in Mrs. Gregory's garden at the end of June, Mrs. Lawrence's account of her journeys through the United States and of her experience of women's political activities in the various States where they have the vote aroused great interest among a number of local working women. There were women present who had never been to a suffrage meeting, who had only heard of the "Suffragettes" in the party papers. One woman, after the meeting, said that her husband had persuaded her to come because "there was a lot of sound common sense in the Suffragettes." She added that she was very glad to have been present because she now understood why women had worked so hard to get the vote, and she hoped the time would soon come when we should have the vote here to help women and children to a happier and a healthier life than they had known under a purely male Government.

After the meeting seventeen copies of VOTES FOR WOMEN were sold, and tea was given with the invaluable assistance of Miss Dalgliesh, Miss Jones, Miss Shore, and Miss Robson-Young, all local U.S. members.

BOLTON U.S.

Hon. Sec. and Treas.: Miss S. W. Holden, 110, Tottington Road, Harwood, Bolton-le-Moors

The usual monthly meeting was held on August 13, Miss E. M. Gordon in the chair. Mr. William Addison, our delegate to the Conference of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council, held in Stockport the previous Saturday, gave a most interesting account of the meeting. The resolutions submitted to the Conference were carried unanimously.

Monday, September 10; 7.30 p.m.—Members' Meeting—Corporation Chambers, Bolton.

HENDON WOMEN'S FRANCHISE SOCIETY

(Affiliated to United Suffragists)
Secretary: Mrs. McCabe, 49, Bridge Lane, Hendon, N.W. 4.

The report for the year is a very satisfactory one, and, as one of our newest members remarked, proves the society to be "very much alive." Several new members joined us during the year, and the society deeply regrets the loss, through death, of the personality and valuable services of Miss Dixon. Of the £22 17s. 6d. total income for the year, 10s. 6d. was paid to the Women's Local Government Association as subscriptions; £5 15s. 6d. was paid in donations to the Garden Suburb Day Nursery; £5 2s. was used to supply at first three, and later two of our prisoners of war in Germany with bread, and both have written our Treasurer in warm and grateful terms of thanks; 12s. 6d. was used for materials to supply shirts and socks for soldiers of the local contingent in France, for which they had appealed, and 8s. 4d. was used as affiliation fee to the United Suffragists.

The annual meeting is to be on Thursday evening, September 20, at eight o'clock, when the report will be read and the future of the Society discussed. We hope a good number of the members will be present, as the occasion is an important one. Dr. Alice Vickery has very kindly given us the use of her room for the meeting at 47, Rotherwick Road.

The Society is hoping to arrange a Conference, early in October, to consider the question, "Should Women Organise as Voters?" All women's associations of the district are invited to attend.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB
9, GRAFTON STREET, PICCADILLY, W.
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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISS A. MAUDE ROYDEN will PREACH at a series of CHURCH SERVICES to be held on Wednesdays, October 10, 17, 24, 31, at 6.30 p.m., in the Conference Hall, Central Buildings, Westminster. The services are open to all.

THE Women's Freedom League will hold public meetings on Wednesday afternoons at 3.30, in the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Sept. 19.—Mr. Laurence Housman on "Prison Reform in America"; Miss Nina Boyle. Chair: Mrs. Mustard. Sept. 26.—Miss Margaret Hodge on "W. T. Stead and his work for the Women's Cause"; Miss Nina Boyle. Oct. 3.—Mrs. M. W. Nevinson on "Our Chances of Success"; Mrs. Mustard. Chair: Mrs. Nourse. Admission Free. Tea can be obtained in the café.

SUNDAY, October 7.—Lecture by Mr. W. L. George: "Will the Position of Married Women be Enhanced or Diminished by the War?" at the Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C. Tea at 4 p.m., lecture 4.30. Discussion invited. Admission 1s. Tickets from the Women's Freedom League.

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